

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 561.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

STORY OF THE COUNTESS OF NITHSDALE.

THE Maxwells, in days bygone, were the most powerful family in the western part of the Scottish Border. One of them, Lord John Maxwell, was, through royal favour, created Earl of Nithsdale in 1585. He was a bold and audacious man, overbearing and unruly, and for a time was the torment of the whole south of Scotland. His successors were less marked in character. If they were more peaceful, it was perhaps because the scope for feudal broils and political confusion had been vastly diminished by the union of the crowns. Attached to the Stewart dynasty, they were steady royalists, for which predilection they suffered forfeiture of title and estates in the person of William, the fifth earl. This young nobleman, having proceeded to St Germain to do homage to James II., there fell in love with Lady Winifred Herbert, youngest daughter of the Marquis of Powis. His devoted affection met with a favourable response. The two were married in 1699; the young earl carrying away his bride to his mansion of Terregles, in the stewartry of Kirkcudbright.

Settling down at this fair scene—noted for its fine gardens—the Countess of Nithsdale had a family of five children, three of whom died in infancy, leaving a son, Lord William Maxwell, and a daughter, Lady Anne. With these surviving children she was living peacefully, expecting no overturn in affairs, when the madly conceived and badly conducted rebellion of 1715 broke out under the Earl of Mar. Lord Nithsdale joined the insurgents; and was taken prisoner at Preston, along with Lords Derwentwater, Widdrington, Wintoun, Carnwath, Kenmure, Bairnsdale, Murray, and many other persons of note, all of whom were forthwith conveyed to London. They were introduced into the city in a kind of triumphal procession, which was much less dis honourable to the unfortunate sufferers, than to the mean minds who pandered to the passions of the mob by planning such an ignoble triumph.

When the prisoners had reached Barnet, they were all pinioned with cords like the vilest criminals. At Highgate they were met by a strong detachment of horse-grenadiers and foot-guards—halters were put upon their horses, and each man's horse was led by a private soldier, and their ears were stunned by the drums of their escort beating a triumphal march, and by the shouts of the multitude, who loaded them with every kind of scurilous abuse and insult. In this manner they were led through the streets of the city, and divided among the four principal prisons, the noblemen being secured in the Tower.

They were not long suffered to remain in uncertainty regarding their fate. On the 9th February 1716, they were tried by the House of Lords on a charge of armed rebellion. They could only plead guilty, and throw themselves on the royal clemency. They were condemned to death, and their execution as traitors was appointed to take place on Tower Hill on Wednesday the 24th of the month. In compliance with an opinion expressed by the House of Lords, the king commuted the punishment so far as concerned Carnwath and Widdrington. As regards Lords Derwentwater, Kenmure, and Nithsdale, the law was left to take its course.

During the insurrection, the Countess of Nithsdale remained quietly with her two children at Terregles; but on learning that her husband had surrendered, and was a prisoner, she resolved, at whatever risk, to join him. The season was the dead of winter, travelling was difficult, an infant daughter had to be taken charge of, and some family papers were to be secured. In the exigency, the countess buried the papers in a corner of the gardens, and committed her child to the care of her sister-in-law. This lady, known in her young days as Lady Mary Maxwell, was a daughter of the fourth Earl of Nithsdale, and had married Charles, fourth Earl of Traquair. Having made such arrangements as were possible in the circumstances, the Countess of Nithsdale set out on horseback, attended by her faithful maid, Cecilia Evans. Thus she travelled as far as York, where she procured a seat in the stage-coach, and was obliged to

leave Evans to continue the journey on horseback. After all, the coach was of little use. On arriving at Grantham, it could get no farther on account of a snow-storm. The countess, writing from Stamford to Lady Traquair, says : 'The snow is so deep it is impossible it [the coach] should stir without some change of weather ; upon which I have again hired horses, and shall go the rest of the journey on horseback to London, though the snow is so deep that our horses yesterday were in several places almost buried in it. . . . To-morrow, I shall set forward again. Such a journey, I believe, was scarce ever made, considering the weather, by a woman. But an earnest desire compasses a great deal with God's help. If I meet my dear Lord Will, and am so happy as to be able to serve him, I shall think all my trouble well repaid. . . . I think myself fortunate in having complied with your kind desire of leaving my little girl with you. Had I her with me, she would have been in her grave by this time, with the excessive cold.'

Animated by an heroic ardour and self-devotion, the countess endured a degree of suffering to which many succumbed ; she at length reached London in safety, but so overcome with fatigue and exposure, that she lay several days in bed. Her first endeavour was to procure admittance to the Tower ; and this, after some difficulty, and under certain restrictions, she obtained. It was a joyful, but also a melancholy meeting with her husband. Only a few days were to elapse before the execution, and if not saved by an interposition of the royal authority, the fate of the earl was to all appearance sealed. The countess, of course, spared no pains in making an appeal for mercy. She went to St James's Palace, had an interview with the king, to whom on bended knee she presented her petition. Not much to the credit of George I, he turned from her, while in an agony of feeling she clung to the skirts of his coat, and on her knees was dragged along a passage, until she fell back fainting. It was a miserable scene. The petition dropped to the ground in the struggle, and was unavailing.

The attempt was discouraging, but hope had not altogether vanished. There were certain proceedings in the House of Lords which offered a chance of the sentence being remitted. The conclusion at which the House arrived was practically this : that the king should exercise the prerogative of mercy only to those who would voluntarily give such information as would be serviceable to the government. In short, pardon was to be granted to none but informers. Hopes could no longer be entertained. Lord Nithsdale would disdain to be an informer. His lady could not wish him to be so, even to save his life. There was now nothing left to evade the execution save an attempt at escape. Pondering on all the circumstances, the heroic countess could fall on no plan likely to be more successful than that of smuggling the earl out of the Tower in women's clothes. It was an ingeniously conceived project, and entered upon with, till then, a matchless degree of skill and resolution. There was little time to lose. In two days the execution was to take place.

Resolved to carry out her plan, the countess, as a first step, rushed to the Tower, and, referring to the proceedings in the House of Lords, gaily remarked to the soldiers on guard that there were good news, and that the sentence on the prisoners

would soon be remitted. She further gave them money to drink the health of the king and the peers. Her object was to put them in good humour and lessen their vigilance, and she did so without raising any suspicions of a trick being contemplated. The earl was judiciously kept in ignorance regarding the scheme devised for his escape ; much, as the countess thought, depending on the perfect secrecy with which it should be carried out. Besides, from all we can learn, Lord Nithsdale was not particularly brilliant nor reserved in character, and we might say that he presented the far from unusual instance of a somewhat dull and selfish husband united to a clever and wholly unselfish wife. That a very high sense of duty and affection animated the countess in this extraordinary effort, cannot be doubted. Until our own times, when Madame Lavalette resorted successfully to the scheme of effecting her husband's escape from execution, there was no case at all to compare with the wifely devotedness of the Countess of Nithsdale.

The manner in which she accomplished her object, has, in a general way, long been known. It is only now, however, that we learn the particulars in all their minute fidelity from the *Book of Cae-laverock*, a work in two large quarto volumes, printed for private circulation, consisting of a collection of family papers, edited by W. Fraser, an eminent Scottish antiquary and genealogist. Among the mass of letters contained in this remarkable work, is one written by Lady Nithsdale to her sister, Lady Lucy Herbert, detailing the circumstances of the escape, and for the first time copied without any attempt at smoothing asperities of language. What we have now to say, therefore, is very much a condensation of this interesting document, which is still happily preserved in the library at Terregles.

In her enterprise, the countess did not trust entirely to herself. She found it expedient to seek the assistance of Mrs Mills, at whose house she lodged, and also Mrs Morgan, a friend of her maid, Evans. On the morning next before the intended execution, she said to Mrs Mills, confidentially : 'Finding now there is no further room for hope of my lord's pardon, nor longer time than this night, I am resolved to endeavour his escape. I have provided all that is requisite for it, and I hope you will not refuse to come along with me to the end that he may pass for you. Nay, more, I must beg you will come immediately, because we are full late.' Thus besought, and having no time for consideration, or for raising objections to the scheme, she consented to render the assistance required of her ; a sense of pity overcoming any apprehension in being concerned in aiding the escape of a convicted traitor. So much being settled, the countess turned to Mrs Morgan, and requested her to put under her own riding-hood another which she had provided. All these now stepped into a coach Evans had brought to the door. They drove to the Tower, and fearing that her two companions might retract, the countess took care to keep up an incessant talk until they arrived at their destination.

Having got within the Tower, the coach was dismissed, and the critical part of the drama commenced. As only one person could be allowed to accompany her on her visit, the countess left Mrs Mills in the vestibule, and took Mrs Morgan upstairs to the earl's apartment, talking to her, in a

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tone to be overheard, as to the probability of a pardon being granted, on presenting a petition which she had with her. When within the chamber, Mrs Morgan divested herself of the spare hood, and was dismissed with the request: 'Pray, do me the kindness to send my maid to me that I may be dressed, else I shall be too late with my petition.' Mrs Mills, who represented the maid, speedily entered the room, holding, as previously arranged, a handkerchief to her face, as if to conceal her tears; by which manoeuvre the guards did not see her countenance. Now took place a rapid but ingeniously executed transformation. There being no time for the earl to have his long beard shaved off, it was daubed over with some white paint, the cheeks were tinged with rouge, and some yellow colouring put on his dark eyebrows. He also tried on Mrs Mills's riding-hood, or more properly cloak, which on going out would effectually shroud his person. It was no part of the countess's design to leave Mrs Mills in the apartment, after the departure of the earl, for she could not tell what might be the vengeance of the government on finding that the prisoner had escaped. She now, therefore, dismissed Mrs Mills, speaking to her so loudly as to be heard by the guards in the ante-room: 'Dear Mrs Catherine, I must beg you to go in all haste and look for my woman, for she certainly does not know what o'clock it is, and has forgot the petition I am to give, which, should I miss, is irreparable, having but this one night; let her make all haste she can possible, for I shall be on thorns till she comes.' Everybody within hearing, who were chiefly the guards' wives and daughters, seemed to be full of compassion; and the sentinel officially opened the door.

'When I had seen Mrs Mills out,' proceeds the countess in her narrative, 'I returned back to my lord, and finished dressing him. When I had given the last touches to his disguise, dressing him in all my petticoats excepting one, I perceived that it was growing dark, and was afraid that the light of the candles might betray us; so I resolved to set off. I went out, leading him by the hand, and he held his handkerchief to his eyes. I spoke to him in the most piteous and afflicted tone of voice, bewailing bitterly the negligence of Evans, who had ruined me by her delay. Then said I: "My dear Mrs Betty, for the love of God, run quickly, and bring her with you. You know my lodging, and if ever you made despatch in your life, do it at present: I am almost distracted with this disappointment." The guards opened the doors, and I went down-stairs with him, still conjuring him to make all possible despatch. As soon as he had cleared the door, I made him walk before me, for fear the sentinel should take notice of his walk; but I still continued to press him to make all the despatch he possibly could. At the bottom of the stairs, I met my dear Evans, into whose hands I confided him. I had before engaged Mr Mills to be in readiness before the Tower, to conduct him to some place of safety, in case we succeeded. Evans and Mr Mills having found a place of security, they conducted my lord to it.'

'In the meanwhile, as I had pretended to have sent the young lady on a message, I was obliged to return up-stairs, and go back to my lord's room, in the same feigned anxiety of being too late; so that everybody seemed sincerely to sympathise

with my distress. When I was in the room, I talked to him as if he had been really present, and answered my own questions in my lord's voice as nearly as I could imitate it. I walked up and down, as if we were conversing together, till I thought they had time enough thoroughly to clear themselves of the guards. I then thought proper to make off also. I opened the door, and stood half in it, that those in the outward chamber might hear what I said; but held it so close that they could not look in. I bade my lord a formal farewell for that night; and added, that something more than usual must have happened to make Evans negligent on this important occasion, who had always been so punctual in the smallest trifles, that I saw no other remedy than to go in person; that, if the Tower were still open when I finished my business, I would return that night; but that he might be assured I would be with him as early in the morning as I could gain admittance into the Tower, and I flattered myself I should bring favourable news. Then, before I shut the door, I pulled through the string of the latch, so that it could only be opened on the inside. I then shut it with some degree of force, that I might be sure of its being well shut. I said to the servant as I passed by, who was ignorant of the whole transaction, that he need not carry in candles to his master till my lord sent for him, as he desired to finish some prayers first. I went down-stairs, and called a coach. As there were several on the stand, I drove home to my lodgings, where poor Mr Mackenzie had been waiting to carry the petition, in case my attempt had failed. I told him there was no need of any petition, as my lord was safe out of the Tower, and out of the hands of his enemies, as I hoped; but that I did not know where he was.'

'Having discharged the coach, I went in a sedan-chair to the house of the Duchess of Montrose, who had always borne a part in my distresses, and to whom I confided the joyful intelligence of his lordship's escape. When I left the duchess, I went to a house which Evans had found out for me, and where she promised to acquaint me where my lord was. I learned that his lordship was in the house of a poor woman, directly opposite to the guard-house, and I went thither. The woman had but one small room up one pair of stairs, and a very small bed in it. We threw ourselves upon the bed, that we might not be heard walking up and down. She left us a bottle of wine and some bread, and Mrs Mills brought us some more in her pocket the next day. We subsisted on this provision from Thursday till Saturday night, when Mrs Mills came, and conducted my lord to the Venetian ambassador's. We did not communicate the affair to his Excellency; but one of his servants concealed him in his own room till Wednesday, on which day the ambassador's coach-and-six was to go down to Dover, to meet his brother. My lord put on a livery, and went down in the retinue, without the least suspicion, to Dover, where Mr Mitchell (the ambassador's servant) hired a small vessel, and immediately set sail for Calais. The passage was so remarkably short, that the captain threw out this reflection, that the wind could not have served better if his passengers had been fleeing for their lives; little thinking it to be really the case. Mitchell might have easily returned without being suspected of

having been concerned in my lord's escape; but my lord seemed inclined to have him continue with him; which he did, and has at present a good place under our young master.

'For my part, I absconded to the house of a very honest man in Drury Lane, where I remained till I was assured of my lord's safe arrival on the continent. With regard to myself, it was decided by government, that if I remained concealed, no further search should be made; but that if I appeared either in England or Scotland, I should be secured. But that was not sufficient for me, unless I could submit to expose my son to beggary.' The countess concludes her interesting relation by mentioning that she went to Scotland to secure the family papers, and having effected this object, she returned to London, and made a strong appeal on her own and her son's behalf to George I. This petition was treated with indignity; and she was advised by her friends to leave the kingdom. The countess accordingly went abroad, and joined her exiled husband at Lille.

Until the appearance of the *Book of Caerlaverock*, little was known of the career of the countess after her brilliant exploit. It is now learned from her letters, that she suffered much and thanklessly for a husband who was undeserving of her. He was, in fact, a senseless spendthrift, recklessly squandering his slender means, even to the extent of depriving his wife of the comforts which were unquestionably her due. Yet she speaks modestly of what she endured on his account, and of what was equally painful, the want of sympathy from the court of St Germain, for the sake of which the Nithsdale family had been ruined. Writing to Lady Traquair from Paris in 1717, she speaks of the failure of an application to procure from court some appointment for the earl. 'My next business,' she adds, 'was to see what I could get to live on, that we might take our resolutions where to go accordingly. But all I could get was a hundred livres [four pounds sterling] a month to maintain me in everything—meat, drink, fire, candle, washing, clothes, lodging, servants' wages; in fine, all manner of necessaries. My husband has two hundred livres a month, but considering his way of managing, it was impossible to live upon it. . . . For let me do what I will, he cannot be brought to submit to live according to what he has; and when I endeavoured to persuade him to keep in compass, he attributed my advice to my grudging him everything, which stopped my mouth, since I am very sure that I would [give] my heart's blood if it could do him any service. . . . It was neither in gaming, company, nor much drinking, that it was spent, but in having the nicest of meat and wine; and all the service I could do was to see he was not cheated in buying it. . . . I, having no hopes of getting anything out of England, am forced to go to the place where my son is, to endeavour to live, the child and me, upon what I told you. All my satisfaction is, that at least my husband has twice as much to maintain himself as I have, so I hope when he sees there is no resource, as, indeed, there is not, having sold all, even to the necessary little plate I took so much pains to bring over, he will live accordingly, which will be some comfort to me, though I have the mortification to be from him, which, after we met again, I hoped never to have separated; but God's will be done, and I

submit to this cross, as many others I have had in this world.'

By way of attempting to mend his circumstances, the earl went to the court of the Chevalier at Urbino. Here, he received so poor a welcome, and encountered so many mortifications, that he had reason to regret what he had endured for the cause of the Stewarts. Meanwhile, his wife, in her lonely desertness, was experiencing the sharpest privations of poverty, and but for kindly succour from Lady Traquair, would have been reduced to absolute want. As for the earl, he inconsiderately borrowed money he could not hope to repay, and drew bills on Lord Traquair, trusting merely to his lordship's generosity for their acceptance. Skirmishing with difficulties, the Countess of Nithsdale had something consolatory in the marriage of her daughter, Lady Anne, with Lord Bellew, an Irish nobleman, in 1731. About the same period, her son John, Lord Maxwell, was married to his cousin, Lady Catherine Stuart, daughter of Lord and Lady Traquair. Another agreeable event was in store. Lord Maxwell successfully established his claim in virtue of an entail to Terregles and the other family estates, notwithstanding his father's forfeiture. At the death of the earl, which took place at Rome in 1744, he entered fully into possession of the property. In his recovered prosperity, Lord Maxwell did not forget his mother. He persuaded her to accept an annuity of two hundred pounds; and we have a striking proof of her unselfishness in the fact, that during her life she set apart a hundred a year to pay her husband's debts. This noble-minded woman died in 1749—her memory being embalmed in the brightest annals of female heroism and devotedness.

The Maxwells never recovered the title of Earl of Nithsdale, and the family in the direct line became extinct. So, likewise, has the earldom of Traquair failed for want of heirs. Yet, the two families have experienced a kind of united revival. John Lord Maxwell and Lady Catherine Stuart have a descendant in William Constable Maxwell of Terregles, who, by a reversal of attainder in 1848, became Baron Herries of Terregles. A son of Lord Herries is destined, under the will of the late Lord Traquair, to be heritable proprietor of the Traquair estates.

w. c.

SWISS ALLMENDS.

SWITZERLAND, given up, if any country ever was, by its patriotic inhabitants to the wandering foreigner, has of late years, during the only months when it is the fashion to visit it, begun to present an aspect so similar to that presented by whilom Greenwich Fair, and been written about so entirely from the picturesque, or athletic, or atmospheric, or facetious, or economic point of view, that it is quite a relief to fall in with a writer who has positively something new to tell us, and instructive also, as well as new, about what has been called 'the playground of Europe.' Such a writer is the Rev. F. Barham Zincke, an acute observer, an original thinker, a solid informant, who, having acquired certain useful knowledge, has imparted it to the public in *Swiss Allmends and a Walk to see them*. We may leave the walk alone; for, though the description thereof fills by far the greater portion of the author's book, it contains no very striking

novelty as regards either the course followed, or the information picked up. We will confine ourselves to the Swiss allmends.

It is more than probable that not even a youth 'crammed' for a competitive examination would be able to define allmend, which 'means land held and used, as the word itself indicates, in common'; and it is quite probable that not a single member of the Alpine Club would know what you were talking about if you were to question him about the Swiss allmends. The term, of course, strictly includes all kinds of land; but usage has restricted it, for the most part, to 'common land under cultivation, with, in fact, almost a further restriction to common land, in which the cultivation is effected by the spade, or, at all events, by the hand of man.' And to whom, in any Swiss commune, is the land common? To the old burghers, who are, 'with but very few exceptions, the lineal descendants of those who were burghers, say two hundred, it may have been five hundred, or even a thousand years ago.' New burghers, or, in other words, 'those, or the descendants of those who, having come in from other cantons or communes,' settled in a given place, 'have no rights of any kind in the common land.' Again, 'land may be common to all the old burghers of a commune equally,' and 'it is then said to belong to the commune'; or 'it may belong to sections of the old burghers, as, for instance, to those who reside in a particular hamlet; or to those who belong to a particular class of families; and these may hold it either simply for their own use, or for the promotion of some defined object.' In any such cases, it is said to belong to a corporation.' The cantons in which Mr Zincke made inquiries about the system and studied the working of it were Unterwalden, Uri, Schwyz, and Glarus; and he has supplied, with a liberal hand, statistical and other details, which, valuable as they, no doubt, must prove to those who have time and opportunity for fully entering into a study of the subject, would repel the ordinary reader, and be out of place in a popular paper. It is worth while, however, to remark that, in 'the commune of Stanz' which 'possesses an unusual amount of cultivable ground,' every 'burgher peasant is allowed one thousand four hundred klahfers, which is about equal to an English acre;' and to this statement may be appended an explanation of 'the disabilities laid on residents who had come in from other cantons or communes.' It was not from anything like petty jealousy that they were excluded 'from political rights, and from participation in the common property,' but from considerations of dear life, and because 'the common property was barely sufficient for the existing burghers.'

And now that political rights have been mentioned in connection with participation in the common property, it will be opportune to mention that, in a Swiss commune, those only who had rights in the common land had originally 'an equal voice in the government and administration of the affairs of the commune,' although 'residents from other cantons, or communes, are now pretty generally admitted more or less completely to participation in political rights.'

Mr Zincke admits that the system of allmends, in very early times, when Switzerland hardly knew the meaning of 'capital,' when the Switzer at home was 'the parasite of the cow,' and when the Swiss abroad was synonymous with a mercenary

soldier or a door-porter, was almost the only system possible. But now things have altered; and he proceeds to shew 'how, under the altered conditions of the times, the old system of common pasture has now become both unnecessary and unfair. To the existing circumstances of the country it is not at all adapted; and so, according to the law which makes them sovereign in human affairs, it must die out.'

Allusion has been made to the time when 'the Swiss abroad was synonymous with a mercenary soldier or a door-porter.' With respect to his acting in the latter capacity, it is enough to refer to the well-known expression in a French comedy: 'No entrance here without *greasing* the knocker: no money, no Swiss.' And as to the former capacity, not only does French history bear witness to it, but Mr Zincke also refers to the sarcastic remark made by a Frenchman, who observed to a Swiss: 'We fight for honour, but you for money,' and who was promptly met by the rejoinder: 'Naturally; each fights for what he has not got.'

Now let us look at the altered condition of Switzerland. The physical character of the country was such that 'for long ages the most assiduous industry could supply the Swiss with only the necessities of life, and barely with them'; and, as 'there was therefore no margin for saving,' the accumulation of capital was unknown there. But mark the change produced by 'new means of transportation and communication, and by the substitution of machinery, the motive-power for which Switzerland has in abundance, for manual labour.' Capital has accumulated and accumulates rapidly; and Switzerland, 'which was for many ages the poorest country in Europe, is rapidly progressing towards becoming, in proportion to the amount of its population, one of the richest.' It is calculated that 'no other country in the world, in proportion to its population, manufactures cotton and silk so largely.' No one can have been for a single day in Zurich without being impressed with the prosperity of its manufactures. The world is deluged with the watches of Geneva, whose inhabitants, though their ancestors might have been dazzled by the prospect of so much money, can nowadays afford to treat with comparative indifference the windfall derived from the eccentricity of a Duke of Brunswick. Add to all this that Switzerland, served by easier means of locomotion and communication, has been enabled to sell her magnificent scenery to foreign countries; or, if another way of looking at the matter be preferable, has risen to the dignity of levying tribute upon foreign nations for the privilege of beholding the wonders and beauties which Nature has committed to her keeping. And how many travellers are computed to 'pass every year through the single town of Interlaken?' No fewer than a hundred and fifty thousand; and if we suppose that those who stay in the country some months, as well as those who stay some weeks, and those who are careless, as well as those who are careful about their out-goings, spend each, on an average of the whole, thirty-five pounds, the whole 'will amount to five million two hundred and fifty thousand pounds.' From many sources, then, there has been, since 'the good old times,' an influx of wealth into Switzerland; and this influx 'has, to a great extent, rendered the old system of common pasture both unnecessary and unfair. While it has been abrogating its necessity,

it has been reversing its action.' Men who have become rich, or comparatively rich, by any one of the roads to wealth which have been opened within recent times to Switzerland, and who have also inherited burghers' rights in the allmends, are entitled to send as many cows as they please to the common pastures, whilst the men who have not been so fortunate, and who, nevertheless, are equally burghers, get 'squeezed out' and 'their rights fall into abeyance,' either because, 'if they work regularly for wages, they will not be able to spend the summer in collecting winter-provender for cows,' or because 'in winter, if they had provender, they could not "devote their time to cows." And so, as Dr Bekker observed to Mr Zincke, 'it is the literal application of the saying, that "to them who have shall be given, and they shall have abundantly; but from them who have not shall be taken away what they appear to have;"' and a system 'which was in its day beneficial to the community, and fair to all, is now the reverse of beneficial to all, and the reverse of fair to all.'

Unfortunately, neither Mr Zincke nor any learned gentleman with whom he became acquainted appears to be ready with any entirely feasible plan for meeting the difficulties which have arisen since the old system of allmends found itself confronted by a new order of things. Of course, the favourite theory is that modern panacea for every evil, education; and 'the true equality for these days is to make the ownership of the land—the chief instrument of production, and participation in the produce of the land, as far as possible equal to all by the thousand ways of the thousand forms of industry society now requires'; or, in other words, 'what is now wanted is that all should have the chance of such an education as would properly qualify each for some form of industry, and enable him, by perseverance, thrift, and cultivated intelligence, to turn it to good account.' It is satisfactory, therefore, to learn that 'this is what the present Swiss system of education aims at doing for every man in the country'; and that an endeavour is made to apply 'the old principle' on which allmends are based 'to a new, a better, and a higher world.'

THE BLOSSOMING OF AN ALOE.

CHAPTER IX.—1854.

LADY MERVYN's anger and discomfiture on the receipt of her son's letter were extreme; and mingled with them was a vague alarm. This was not like David. Had something new come to him? How had he changed thus towards her? The dry tone of rebuke, the formal brevity of the letter, frightened as much as they angered her, and awoke within her a sense of helplessness as painful as it was strange. She had never before realised the absolute independence of her son, which, though he had fully enjoyed it, he had not paraded; and the conviction came home to her with a shock, that she had seriously compromised the influence by which only her authority could now be replaced, that she had made a mistake fatal to the object which she had so greatly at heart.

'Ungrateful! insolent!'—such were the terms which she applied to her son, as she fought, in her stern way, with the emotions his letter produced. 'This is my reward for long years of effort for his

sake, for the self-restraint and self-denial of a life. That he should dare to rebuke me, in terms of hardly veiled contempt, and set his high-mindedness up at the expense of my mercenary nature! My proposition to him is perfectly just, and sensible, and legitimate, and there is no mother who in my place would not make it. But it is always thus: we love them, toil for them, suffer for them, and they repay us with thanklessness and contempt.' She was walking to and fro in her dressing-room, with the letter in her hand, her handsome face lowering with anger; but under it all, and aggravating it all, lay her consciousness that she had blundered, that she had been too precipitate, that she had behaved ill to Anne Cairnes. She had indeed too long outlived the sentimental days of a maiden's fancies, to be keenly sympathetic with the feelings of a girl circumstanced as Anne was, but she ought to have respected the secret she had surprised. She recognised this too late. If she had only left it to David to find out for himself! But, bitterly as she regretted the blunder, and much as she reproached herself for it, Lady Mervyn was not a woman to allow her own share of blame to blot out that of any offence to herself. She would make her son feel that she resented the tone he had assumed towards her, while she would carefully conceal from Anne that she had any share in the motives which induced David to avoid his father's house. Lady Mervyn did not accept this serious check as a defeat; she was sure of her facts in Anne's case, and the suspicion that there was any motive for David's conduct other than the avowed one, never crossed her mind. David would get tired of keeping out of Anne's way, his indignation at the suggestion in her letter would subside, but the suggestion itself remain present to his mind; and when he should come to Barrholme, he would find Anne willing to give him herself and her fortune for the asking.

Lady Mervyn made no reply to David's letter. She resolved that she would not write to him until he again addressed her; this was the easiest way of backing out of her false position; thus she would convey to him her displeasure effectually. The same afternoon she called on Anne, who had returned to Victoria Lodge, and whom she found looking ill and depressed.

'I can see that you miss Marion as much as I do,' said Lady Mervyn: 'it will be so pleasant when she comes home, and is within a drive of us. I have had a letter from her to-day.'

'I have had one also,' said Anne: 'she is getting tired of being away from us all, she says.'

'I daresay. But she will be so disappointed about David. Is it not provoking, my dear, he cannot get back? At last he has written to me; and just as I supposed, the business which took him away was a regimental mystery, and we shall never be any the wiser about it. And he is still mixed up in the affair, so that he cannot get away; we shall not see him again for some time, I fear.'

'It was very unfortunate,' said Anne: 'and a great vexation for you and Sir Alexander.'

This was all very decorous, and as it should be; and after a few more friendly commonplaces, the two ladies parted, each satisfied that she had acquitted herself well, and betrayed to the other no feeling which she would have wished to hide. But, when Lady Mervyn was gone, Anne Cairnes

was no less heavy-hearted than before, and no less convinced that the trouble which had turned David Mervyn into a living image of dread before her eyes, was a trouble personal to himself. It would indeed be unreasonable to feel alarm on this mysterious subject any longer ; his letter to his mother, little as she had learned of its contents —she would have given much to have read those lines, *and between them*—was evidently of a nature to allay alarm ; but the grief of it remained. And he was not coming back : the hope which had strangely stirred her heart and brightened her life must be relinquished ; the confidence she had dreamed of receiving, the help she had had a vision of giving, they would never be real. She gave way for a while to more profound discouragement than had ever before seized upon her ; she murmured against her fate. No real change had passed upon it, but she fancied that it might have been different if that promised, unfulfilled interview had taken place. At least she would have known something about his life and its troubles ; it would not have been all so vague and shadowy, nor she so isolated, of so little worth and meaning in it. How little importance he attached to that counsel he had asked for, to the confidence which had so much importance for her ! If it were not so, he would have come back, or written to her, or at least sent a message through his mother, which would have been intelligible to her. Oh, that this break in her still, gray life had not come ! It was the eternal protest of youth against suffering, its revolt against disappointment, ever recurring, for ever vain ; and Anne was nearer, in the weeks which followed David's brief appearance at Barrholme, to the break-down, the relinquishment, the acknowledgment of defeat, the surrender all along the line, which are grouped under that one significant title, 'a broken heart,' than she ever was afterwards. The rich man's envied heiress, the handsome young lady, popular and beloved in her narrow circle, in whose path there did not lie a pebble visible to any eyes, whose life had all things in it that wealth could purchase, or taste suggest, with leisure and health, and a well-regulated mind, and strong sense of duty to insure their true and permanent enjoyment, was awfully near the brink of the abyss of hopeless dejection, close to the clutch of Giant Despair ! She escaped from the danger, however, for she was strong-souled, and she feared and loved God, recognised His Will, and submitted. But that was a time to which she never afterwards could bear to look back ; it had somewhat of the horror of a battlefield for her, from which she had carried away wounds slow of healing, and apt to ache. Her father, perfectly alive to, and familiar with, the symptoms of physical illness, but whose experience was altogether of the surface of human lives, did not know what to make of Anne during this time. Sickness of heart he happily never suspected, and every other kind of illness Anne strenuously denied. Yet she was altered in many unmistakable ways, and Mr Cairnes thought she had better have sea-air. Did not Lady Mervyn think so ? But Lady Mervyn, who felt herself to some extent to blame with respect to Anne, and who, without fully appreciating them, had some comprehension of Anne's feelings, strenuously opposed the notion. It would never do, she said, to take Anne away, just

when Marion and Gordon Græme were coming to Nutwood, and the friends were to be reunited. Her ladyship also thought, but did *not* say, that it would never do to take Anne away, when there was a chance, any day, that David might come down to Barrholme. Mr Cairnes submitted ; but he took the precaution of directing an agent to look out for a commodious and well-situated house at Hastings for him ; to which place he privately made up his mind that he would remove his daughter for the winter, if she did not soon pick up her good looks and her flesh. He remembered very well when he was not so rich a man as he had since become, but had to content himself with lodgings, when he and his wife 'went for an outing,' as they used to say in those dear vulgar old days, how much good Hastings had done his darling Mary, how she had gone back to Manchester with roses on her cheeks which bloomed there for long after ; and he believed in Hastings. Anne improved, however, in health and looks, and she and her father remained at the Tors.

The weeks went by ; the winter, unusually early, and severe, came swiftly, but it did not bring David Mervyn to Barrholme. He had written to his mother, after a short time, as if nothing had happened to interrupt their correspondence, or chill their relations, and she had been obliged to make the best of the position. When she asked him, in one of her letters—which she tried to write in the old strain—whether he was not coming home to see them before the year should end, he answered, that it was impossible for him to get leave at present. So came the peaceful and prosperous year 1853 to its close.

They were not great readers of any kind of literature at Barrholme, and the political portions of the few newspapers which came to the house were rarely glanced at. Sir Alexander retained a faint interest in the doings of the sporting world, and Lady Mervyn liked to read occasionally of those of the fashionable circles in which she had once moved. But great events, which were scarce just then, interested either but little, and of any forethought or forecast of the signs of the times, they were both innocent. Their life, so narrow of late years, had narrowed their perceptions and their sympathies. Hence the rumour of war with Russia, which arose about that time, was slow of reaching, and still more slow of alarming them. Not so Mr Cairnes, who, in addition to his business habits, with their obligatory acquaintance with public affairs, had both intelligence and information. But he was away at Manchester, whither Anne had accompanied him, as was her wont at the beginning of the year—when she visited several local charities, and her own poor pensioners—when the war-cloud settled down upon England, and dismay and dread struck to the hearts of thousands of families. We had never been really at peace, during the long interval between the fall of the first French Empire and the declaration of the war since known as the Crimean, but English soldiers had fought, English blood had been shed in far-distant lands, for the conquest and the conservation of India, for commerce with China—distant and dim aims, to the minds of the many, and carrying desolation only to the few among the upper classes, on whom the popular sentiment is much too apt to

concentrate itself on such occasions. These wars, their cost in blood and suffering, and their legacy of mourning widowhood and orphanhood, were held of small account at home here. We talked of the Peninsular and Waterloo campaigns as ancient history ; we had our great Temple of Mammon and Peace, and we adopted a millennial tone, manner, and habit of mind, full of self-glorification, and reflection upon our neighbours.

It was at Manchester that Anne Cairnes learned from her father, first, the imminence, and then, the certainty of war. They learned them a little later at Barrholme. To say that to David Mervyn's mother and to Anne Cairnes the meaning of the event was entirely summed up in danger to the object of their common love, is merely to say that they felt about it as every woman felt who had a life that was dear to her to be staked in an incomprehensible strife. One great writer has made all the world thrill with the sense of what war means to women, by his beautiful terrible picture of Amelia Osborne's hopeless anguish ; no meaner hand should ever touch the theme.

'Mervyn's regiment goes with the first transports'—her father told Anne, and went on to express much commiseration for his good neighbours and friends—though, he supposed, it would be a fine thing for the captain. Then came a letter from Marion Gremé. The dreadful news was true ; their David was going to the war, and her father and mother were in the profoundest grief. She thought it would kill her father, even if David should escape being killed or wounded ; she could not have believed in Sir Alexander's having so much feeling about anything. Her mother was calm, but so altered that she was hardly recognisable ; and as for herself, she could not make a pretence of caring about the glory of the thing, or the chances of David's promotion—through other people being killed, who had women to love them also—she could think of nothing but the horrible danger, the distance, and the suspense and misery they must all endure, God only could know for how long. David had come down to see them ; the dreadful parting was over. He had been with them for only a few hours, and it was better so. His mother had wished to return with him to London, that she might see to some comforts for him, and be with him to the last ; but he would not allow her to accompany him, he said he could not endure more, and, indeed, his looks shewed that he could not. But he was full of the war, the spell was on him in spite of all, and, it seemed, the spirit of the army was most excellent. But Marion did not care in the least about that, and was sure Anne would not care either, but would feel as they felt. She (Marion) could never be sufficiently thankful that Gordon was not a soldier. They wanted Anne home very much indeed, and hoped she would not make any delay. David had spoken so affectionately of her, of his sense of the comfort she would be to them, and had desired to be most kindly remembered by her. He was to sail in a few days—a dreadful voyage to begin with, and such an endless time before they could have letters—could not Anne get back by the time he should have sailed ? It would help Marion so immensely with her task at Barrholme, where Gordon, who persisted in over-estimating her importance to her parents, thought they had better stay for some time. It would be dreadful, but so

much less dreadful if Anne could come home at once.

The parting was over ! and for her ? Was it better that there should be no parting—to mean so awfully much to her, so little to him, when she should be forced to look on him with tearless eyes, and to bid him farewell with only the kindly concern of any other friend ? How would she have borne that ? She did not know ; but this she knew, that the sight of him, just for one hour, the filling of her eyes and her heart with his presence, would have made the after-burden easier to bear. What if that face he had turned upon her, on the rocky platform at Barrholme, were to be 'the last, last look of him that ever she should see ?' The silent, intense, unshared agony was too much for Anne's strength. She was not to return to Scotland to help and comfort her friends, while her own sad and vain love would be the most forlorn grief among them all. In the same week in March 1854 in which the transport with David Mervyn's troop on board sailed, Anne Cairnes was struck with dangerous illness, from which she did not rally until late in April, when she was taken to Hastings by her father.

CHAPTER X.—PARTING.

It is a few days before David Mervyn's farewell visit to Barrholme, and he and Lucy are talking of it in the sitting-room over the Berlin shop at Hammersmith. Lucy has not wished for any better home, and David has acquiesced in her desire to stay there for many reasons. It is needless to inquire into how the inexperienced young wife, idolised by her young husband, living for him solely, without another friend, or an object in the world, except her baby, with no strength of mind to meet even ordinary trial, and no knowledge of the world to prepare her for the inevitable in life, has taken the intelligence that her darling, her lover, her idol, he in whom every thought, idea, and delight are centred, must leave her, for the unknown, inconceivable, hideous perils and sufferings of war. She has gone through every imaginable phase of mental anguish, from wild, rebellious, loud incredulity, the refusal to credit the possibility of such a horror befalling her, to abject, cowering, pitiable despair ; and she has writhed in all the physical expressions of heart-torture, from the paroxysms of hysterical suffocation to the prostration that is but little removed from death. There have been intervals of motionless mute misery almost more agonising to witness, so agonising to David that he now feels a frantic longing to be gone, to be alone with his own sorrow on the sea, and anon clasps her in his arms, with swift remorse for the momentary temptation springing from their intolerable pain. In the press of preparation, he is necessarily absent from her often, and each time when he returns her joy and her anguish are terrible to him. He has spoken with Mrs Ferris about the arrangements which she is to make for his wife and child after his departure, and has told her that he hopes his mother and sister will shortly take charge of them, for that he is going to Scotland to reveal his marriage, and to recommend the dear ones he is leaving to them. Mrs Ferris has commended this intention, but added that she will do all in her power for her sister, and that she fears she would hardly get on

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with 'strangers' under such circumstances. And, when David, who finds Lucy calmer than usual, for she has worn herself out with weeping, tells her the same thing, she amazes him by the earnestness of her entreaties that he will abandon his intention. Huddled up close to him, her hands clasped about his neck, and her bright hair lying loose upon his breast, her stiffened tear-stained eyelids, closed with pain, resting against his cheek, she pours out her impetuous prayer, while he listens, with knitted brow, and a world of doubt, misgiving, and anxiety in his face.

'Don't, David; pray, pray, don't, my darling husband! I could not bear it, indeed, I could not! Let me live all alone here with my sister, and exist through the awful, awful time, as well as I can. Think how awful it must be to me under any circumstances, and don't make it worse by either sending me among strangers, or bringing down on me the anger and hatred of your father and mother, and sister.'

'Anger and hatred, dearest! Do you think they would have such feelings towards my love, my wife, now?'

'No; I am wrong; I did not mean that; I did not mean to say a word against them; I only mean that I should be too wretched.'

'Do not think that they would blame you, my treasure, my darling, for the concealment; I would make them understand clearly that it was all my doing, that you had no thought in our marriage but for me alone.'

'I know, I know; but that would make no difference. O David! it is not of that I am thinking; it is not for them I care, though I pity them, I pity them awfully—for you are going away from them too. I am only thinking of myself, of my own unspeakable misery, and that I shall be able to bear it better alone, than if they should take me to be with them, and be ever so kind to me. Don't refuse me, David, don't refuse me this one only consolation, to be quite alone when—when you are gone.'

'But, my darling,' he remonstrated, with painful hesitation, for he dreaded to present to her the idea which he must assign in explanation of his strongest motive, 'it is my bounden duty to provide for your recognition as my wife; to insure your protection by my family, if—if I should not return to you, Lucy.'

She pressed herself still closer to him, twisting the fingers behind his neck as if they writhed with pain, and gasped out: 'Don't say it; don't utter the word; I can't bear it; it could not be!'

'I must speak of the possibility, and my wife—a soldier's wife—must listen, and try to be reasonable and submissive. I may be killed in this war, dearest, and you and the child must not be unknown and unprotected. Think of what I should suffer from the knowledge that you were here in a dubious position, and with no means of securing your rights, except asserting them for yourself.'

She raised herself a little, so that she could see his face, and said, more calmly than she had yet spoken: 'Our marriage was quite right and regular, was it not?'

'Of course it was.'

'It is registered, and James Ferris and my brother witnessed it. The church and the clergyman are there, and it is easy to prove that I am

your wife. Yield to me in this, dearest David; and I promise you that, if I lose you, I will at once apply to your mother for recognition as your wife. Your colonel is a great friend of yours, you have told me.'

'He is.'

'Then tell him about our marriage, after you have sailed, and let him promise that if—if it should be so—he will make my fate known to me. Do this for me! It is the only thing that can make my lot more endurable now. And when you come home—when you come home—then tell them. They will not mind, in their joy. They will forgive you, and me too, when they see you safe.'

Her poor attempt at a smile vanished in a spasm of agony; her composure ended in a fit of weeping, which left her in a state of complete prostration.

But she had gained her point; and no farther discussion disturbed their last days together.

David's conscience did not reproach him for the brief space into which he compressed his farewell to his parents and his home. Had there been no Lucy, he would not have remained at Barrholme an hour longer than he actually did stay, for he had the shrinking from all scenes of emotion—except those that arise from the one intimate, incomparable love and grief of husband and wife—common to most men, and which is no true indication of absence of feeling. No trace of a recollection of the misunderstanding between himself and his mother was in David's mind or manner during his brief visit, and when the parting was over, he left none but loving thoughts of him, and high hopes mingling with the mother's fears. He was going to the scene of a soldier's ambition, ready to do his duty; and they who so loved and admired his quiet courage, his unaffected readiness, would have had more room for appreciation of them had they known all that was tugging at his heart-strings.

In a short time after they knew at Barrholme that David had sailed, intelligence of Anne Cairnes's illness reached Lady Mervyn and Marion. It conveyed to the former the confirmation of her belief in Anne's love for David. 'He will come home,' his mother thought, in her more sanguine moments, when she threw off the oppression of fear, and took a cheerful view of her son's prospects—'he will come home, a distinguished officer, and marry her at last.' Lady Mervyn's cares were heavy just then. It had cost her an effort, which it was difficult to conceal, to supply David with the funds necessary for his equipment and provision, and for the first time he had acknowledged to his mother that there were some outstanding debts to be discharged. She betrayed no displeasure or uneasiness, and there was not anything beyond the pure and simple pain of parting in the farewell confidences of the mother and the son.

Lucy Mervyn could not have told how the days passed after her husband left her. The sharp agony of the actual parting was succeeded by a period of great weakness, from which she rallied to the misery of long suspense, and restlessness, which she could not control. Her sister was kind to her, and in the main, intelligently considerate, but she was sometimes impatient with the concentration of Lucy's life on one object, a concentration which was foreign to her own nature and

sympathies. She held that Lucy really ought to rouse herself; one would think there was nobody in the world except David Mervyn, and that there were no other wives in suspense and anxiety about their husbands. Lucy did not heed these arguments; there was no one but David in the world for her, and she cared nothing about the other men and their anxious wives—what did they matter to her? When news began to come in from the theatre of the war, it had only one item of interest for her, David's safety; she never even tried to master the details of the struggle; she hated the Russian power and the English power equally; they were both her enemies; she would not have cared in the least if the defeat of her own countrymen had been the means of bringing her husband home. For, and on his letters she lived, a half-dead sort of life, under which her health rapidly declined, and which Mrs Ferris and her husband, who was not a bad sort of man, but eminently positive and unsentimental, much condemned.

'If she goes on like this,' said Mr Ferris to his wife, one evening, when, on his return from the docks, he found her very much 'put out about Lucy,' who had been crying all day over a letter from David, 'she will just kill herself. She has no sense, and very little strength, and she looks very bad indeed, I think. I tell you what it is, my dear, we are not acting rightly by the captain, in letting her go on in this way. He will come home all right, I daresay, and find that she has fretted herself into a decline.'

'She tries my patience, I must say,' said Mrs Ferris; 'and yet, poor soul, I cannot find it in my heart to blame her. I never saw two people in my life so wrapped up in each other.'

There arose, from this conversation, a plan on Mrs Ferris's part by which she hoped to rouse Lucy from her absorption. She spoke to her about her child, suggesting that the baby, now ten months old, was not growing as she ought, and that change of air would do them both good. Lucy was almost pleased at the notion, which implied still more solitude for her, because her sister could not leave the Berlin shop to take care of itself. It was agreed that change of air should be had, and the seaside for a couple of months was suggested—some place within excursion-ticket distance, where her sister could visit Lucy on Sundays. On a Saturday in July, the little party left London, and, on the following Monday Mrs Ferris returned, having installed her sister in pleasant rooms—in a farmhouse near St Leonard's, and left her, looking better and more cheerful than she had looked since the parting with her husband in the early spring. There was a lull in the war-news just then, and even Lucy's fears were appeased by the monotony of the life which David's letters described, and on which he carefully dwelt, saying as little as possible of the advancing preparations for strife, in which the cavalry would have their share.

The house in which Lucy lived was out of the beaten track of the sojourners at the fashionable watering-place. It was beyond the promenade mark, though within a few minutes' walk of the beach, and Lucy rarely went farther than the stretch of sea and shingle in front of it. There she would pass many hours of every day, sitting on a heap of shawls, with a book, which she rarely opened, beside her, but busy with needlework when the

air was still; while the nurse walked about with the baby, or sat by her when the little creature slept. Sometimes, Lucy's voice, powerful and sweet as of old, but with a new depth of melody in it, might have been heard singing to the sea, in the long rose-tinted evenings, the songs her husband loved. 'Sing them at a certain hour,' he wrote to her, 'and I shall hear them in my tent, with my heart'; and so she sang them, but often she could not bear the feelings which her own voice aroused, and she would rise and hurry into the house, to weep and pray.

There was a song in vogue twenty years ago, in whose somewhat rugged verse and simple music David Mervyn took much delight. He had made his sister, who sang like most young ladies then, and now, very badly, learn this song, and Anne Cairnes had studied it without his asking. *Don't you remember fair Alice, Ben Bolt?* had superseded, twenty years ago, the earlier melodious demand, *What are the Wild Waves saying?* which was also a favourite with David. Lucy sang the former song to perfection, and David's love for the simple, poignant melody had never waned. When she sang to him, now, on summer evenings, over the sea, it always cost her most pain to sing this song, but she sang it, nevertheless, and even with increasing melody and expression. It chanced that one evening a boating-party from Hastings, tempted by the silvery suave beauty of the tranquil sea, rowed out of the usual bounds, and resting awhile on their oars close in shore beyond St Leonard's, heard sweet singing. They listened, keeping profound silence, until the last strain died away, and they saw a woman, who stood upright for a moment, facing the sea, then turned, and went her way along the beach.

'What a delicious voice!' said Mr Cairnes to his daughter, who was leaning over the boat's side towards the sea. 'I never heard sweeter singing. What expression she gave to that line which used to give you so much trouble. "And fair Alice lies under that stone."

AN OLD SOLDIER.

We know the effect produced by a simple soldier's tale upon soft-hearted Desdemona; and, though it may be difficult in these latter days to fall in with maidens of Desdemona's type, it is certain that a charm still lingers about the frank, unpretentious, soldierly, somewhat garrulous, and somewhat rugged style of a veteran telling his story, whether it be 'pitiful' or other. If any doubt this assertion, let proof of the pudding be had by eating; let acquaintance be made with the pages of a book entitled *Recollections of Sir George E. L'Estrange*, and it will be wonderful if the reader do not confess to the influence of an attractive power, even if the cause of its existence be not easy to define.

The date of the *Recollections* is that of the Peninsular War; and could certain 'heliotype reproductions of drawings by officers of the Royal Artillery' be represented here, a far better and more instantaneous idea than any that can be given in words would be obtained of the personal appearance of Sir Roger L'Estrange, Knt, the first member of Sir George's family who distinguished

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himself as a literary character, and who has been denounced by Lord Macaulay as a ‘scurrilous pamphleteer;’ of the figure cut by Sir George himself, in his youth, when he, being at his wits’ end for means of coaxing along on their march a number of Irish recruits, hit upon the notable expedient of playing ‘Irish tunes for them on the flute’ (of which he was anything but a master), whilst he rode at their head ; of a laughable scene between two English officers and a French game-keeper ; of the fate that overtakes tents and their inmates ‘when the snow begins to fall on the top of the Pyrenees;’ of a meeting, at the village of Vieux Mouguerre, between Sir George, then a young subaltern, and the ‘Iron Duke;’ of the ‘escape of Stepney St George at the battle of Albuera;’ of a meeting between two veterans ; and of Hunstanton Hall, ‘the ancient seat of the L’Estranges,’ in Norfolk.

Sir George, who is happily still alive, and as well as age, and campaigns, and ‘painful family afflictions’ permit him to be, is not only a soldier, but the son of a soldier, and the kinsman of soldiers ; and in 1812, at the early age of fifteen, he sailed from England to join his regiment, the gallant 31st, ‘when in winter-quarters after the disastrous retreat from Burgos.’ He had previously been at Westminster School, about which he has many a good story to tell, especially one relating to a certain Johnny Campbell, who, being usher at a ‘dame’s house, and having purchased a pair of pistols, was in a condition like that of the man who won, at a raffle, a white elephant : he didn’t know what to do with them. But the powers that provide mischief for simpletons intervened, and decreed that ‘a mad cat’ should be found in the beer-cellar of the dame’s house, and should refuse to be dislodged. ‘Leave her to me : I’ll shoot her,’ said the intrepid Campbell : ‘I require no light ; the glare of her eye will be enough for me.’ He accordingly shut himself up alone with the cat in the cellar, and fired both pistols at her, but without effect. As he was ‘preparing to reload,’ he ‘found himself most unexpectedly ankle-deep in beer ; for though he had twice missed the cat, he had both times hit the beer-barrels, and let out their contents ;’ and the ‘dame,’ Sir George says, ‘instead of being obliged, threatened to take proceedings against him for the value of her beer.’ Thus are meritorious actions, if unsuccessful, unappreciated.

Young L'Estrange, soon after his arrival abroad, made the acquaintance of Maurice Quil, a well-known character, a surgeon, who, under another name, has been rendered immortal by the pen of the late Charles Lever ; and, a day or two afterwards, he narrowly escaped a premature death at the hands of an alcalde, to whom, in a moment of irritation, and at a loss for fluent Portuguese, he unfortunately applied an opprobrious term. But he was soon to grow wiser ; and involuntary witness is borne by him to the celerity and effectiveness with which military duties, especially in time of war, are calculated to teach, by means of the sense of responsibility they inspire, a wholesome lesson of modest but confident and serious behaviour, when he records his feelings as he wondered, on a certain occasion of trust, that he, a mere boy, ‘should have so vast a sum suddenly thrust upon’ him, ‘with the command of a body of men who could not be exceeded

in the whole world.’ After ‘a long and a most tedious and solitary march of several hundred miles,’ he at length found his regiment, the 31st, ‘in a village called Ceclavin ;’ and with that corps he was to witness many a stirring event ere, after the close of the Peninsular War, he would see himself ‘gazetted an ensign and lieutenant in the 3d Foot Guards,’ now the Scots Fusilier Guards.

Young L'Estrange went through two campaigns. Our blood tingles sympathisingly as he describes his feelings when he began real soldiering, and bivouacked after his first day’s march, which ‘took place on the breaking up of the winter-quarters of the British army to advance on the French, who were then falling back on Vittoria, to make their final stand in Spain,’ and when he ‘visited the field where that great and bloody battle of Talavera had been so lately fought.’ He gives his impressions of the battle of Vittoria for what they are worth, modestly pointing attention to the fact, that he was a boyish subaltern, whose opinion as to strategy would be worse than useless ; but everybody can enter into his description of the sickening sensation that came over him at sight of the first dead body ; of the cannon-ball’s course marked ‘by the lowering of the ears of corn,’ and of the very natural inclination he felt, but fortunately did not obey, to stop some of the balls with his foot, ‘they appeared to roll so slowly.’ Everybody, too, can share his sentiments of mingled pride and awe and growing determination, when he found himself, at sixteen years of age, called, by the wound of his captain, to ‘command the light company of the 31st ;’ and everybody can and will acknowledge how telling is the brevity as well as spirit with which he relates how he ‘heard a tremendous rush on our left ;’ how he saw the British host hurl themselves upon the French ; and how the latter ‘turned in retreat along their whole line, and the battle of Vittoria was won.’ Everybody, moreover, will join with him in his reminiscences, as the French were pursued towards Roncesvalles, of Charlemagne, and Sir Roland, and Sir Oliver, and stout Archbishop Turpin.

Thus he writes of the way in which he joined in his first battle, Vittoria : ‘As we approached the wood, the fire from it slackened, and we entered and passed through without meeting much opposition ; but when we emerged at the opposite side, we saw the dark line of the French army, still in their position, within point-blank distance. A perfect hailstorm of bullets was poured down upon us, which, if it had lasted, must have swept us all into eternity. . . . Looking to my right, I saw my captain, Girdlestone, wounded and supported by the bugler. I rushed over to him ; he seized me by the hand, gave it a hard squeeze, and said to me : “Go on, my boy ! your name will be mentioned.” . . . I ran on frantically to the front. . . . I was parched with thirst from the heat and excitement, when an officer attached to the light company of the Buffs, seeing me panting for breath, dipped his hand, on which was a thick glove, into a ditch, which was more blood than water, and passed it across my mouth, which greatly refreshed me.’

After the battle of Vittoria, as is well known, Napoleon sent his ablest general, Marshal Soult, to ‘sweep the British,’ including young L'Estrange, ‘into the sea.’ But Sir George shews with a grin, in which the reader cannot but participate, how the

marshal 'caught a Tartar.' Not but what the British had to retreat, before young L'Estrange could add to his escutcheon the names of Nive, or Orthes, or Toulouse, and boast—save that he never boasts—that he had seen the end of the Peninsular War. And that very retreat enables Sir George to tell a characteristic anecdote about his general, Sir John Byng. 'I was walking alongside of the general on horseback,' he says, 'and feeling the gravel rather penetrating my foot, I turned it up to Sir John, and shewed him the bare skin of my foot, both shoe and stocking being worn through. He said : "There is one of my mules that is not gone to the rear with my baggage, and I think I have a pair of shoes that I will lend you," which he did when we got to the town, but remarked at the same time : "I shall not be ashamed to take them back when we next see our baggage ;" and when they were returned 'not fit to make a pair of old slippers,' they 'were thankfully received by Sir John.' A good story, also, is related about a 'colonel who, having been shot through the trousers, went to the rear, and, instead of the doctor, one of the regimental *tailors* was sent to dress his wound.' The battle of Albuera was before Sir George's time ; but his brother-in-law, Stepney St George, who was present at it, had so singular an escape that it deserves to be mentioned. St George had 'received a very severe wound, and lay upon the field of battle. A Polish lancer gave him a poke with his lance, and finding there was life in him, thought he should perhaps secure an officer of high rank. He took him by the collar, and was dragging him into the French lines in a state of insensibility, when St George was aroused from his swoon by something warm trickling down upon his head. It proved to be the life-blood of the Pole, who had received a mortal wound from a musket-shot, which relieved him of his burden ; and poor St George managed to crawl back into the British lines, and was saved.'

Sir George proposes, if he be spared, to publish at a future time some more *Recollections* ; and they, no doubt, will meet with a cordial welcome.

A HOLIDAY IN PROVENCE.

ITALY and France have both been commemorating the death—exactly five hundred years ago—of Petrarch, the one at Arqua and Padua, the other at Avignon and Vaucluse. It is not singular that the two countries should claim a right to honour the poet's memory ; for he belonged to both. Italy was the land of his birth, death, and burial ; France, that of his life's love, his romance, and his inspiration. The career of Francesco Petrarqua was a long and varied one ; but its conspicuous episode, that rose above the level of common history, was the strange spell wrought upon a brilliant mind by a single glimpse of a beautiful woman kneeling in a church. During forty-seven years after that accidental vision, he never ceased, even when the lady was dead, to make of his genius an altar at which she was, to quote his own rhapsodies, adored. Born at Arezzo, in Tuscany, July 19, 1304, he died at Arqua, among the Euganean Hills, in 1374, where he built a house, and, subsequently, a tomb, though not the monu-

mental one, in red stone, supported by pillars, which is now said to contain his remains. But he early fled to Avignon, on the Rhone, and there, while a young man, saw Laura, the type of all his future ideals, in one of the churches. From Avignon he retired to the exquisite valley of Vaucluse, a solitude shut in by stupendous rocks, one of which is pierced by the celebrated grottoes, or caverns, whence flow the rapid and wandering waters of the Sorgue. Here, in a little cottage by the stream, 'enrapt by beauty,' he mused, and wrote ; here, he received deputations from distinguished Italian cities ; thence he more than once went, bearing the credentials of an ambassador ; yet, there or elsewhere, the image perpetually haunted him of one, dressed in green velvet, sprinkled with violets, who had all the grace of a dryad, and all the stateliness of a queen. They occasionally met, but always on terms of the most distant friendship. Laura de Noves, afterwards Laura de Sade, and mother of eleven children, was born at Avignon, four years later than Petrarch, married at seventeen, and died of the plague at forty. Her grave was discovered in the Church of the Cordeliers, two centuries later. That which the poet built for himself—and to which, robed in red satin, he was carried on a bier, spread and canopied with cloth of gold, lined with ermine, by sixteen doctors—was abandoned later for that which is still pointed out as containing his bones.

Five centuries having elapsed since the death of Petrarch, the scholars of Arqua and Avignon resolved once more to glorify his name, and certainly the spectacle of medievalism I witnessed in the chief city of the Vaucluse was the perfection of revivalism. As a pageant, I never saw anything comparable with it. Trumpets led the way ; heralds followed, proclaiming the glory of Petrarch ; then archers, mace-bearers, halberdiers, tambourine-players, allegorical cars—eleven in number—superbly decorated, fantastic personages on horseback, from Don Quixote to the Colonnas and Visconti, Knights of Malta, and ancient guilds, all perfectly solemn, as the people also were. Nor could a fitter frame have been given to such a picture, for Avignon scarcely knows change ; its architecture is older than the time when Petrarch died, when Chaucer was a child, and Verulam was unborn ; its palaces and churches are venerable, almost to decay ; the ancient houses have their windows heavily barred ; traces of painted walls remain ; every street, though narrow, dirty, crooked, and hideously paved, is picturesque. I had seen the relics of past epochs at Arles and Tarascon, Orange and Pierrelatte ; but none looked so gray. Here stands a tenth-century porch by a twelfth-century tower ; this is a Roman arch ; that a belfry which gave forth peals to fifteenth-century congregations. The palace of the popes, converted into barracks, was built like a fortress, with enormous walls, and labyrinths of dungeons, few of which are accessible now. Altogether,

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Avignon seems to stand, with its countless turrets, wondrously picturesque, when illuminated by the evening sun, in the very gateways of history, and it only needed the sight of such a procession to complete the illusion.

But even a transformation scene, it may be imagined, would weary the youngest mind, were it to last all night; and thus the coloured lanterns and masquerades of Avignon, the fruit and flower banquets and antiquarian music of Vaucluse, after five or six days of picturesque revel, gave zest to the idea of an uninvited participation in a long-anticipated holiday among the peasantry of Provence. The very rumour, indeed, of such a rustic festival, after the unrealities of the past week, was tempting; for nowhere, even in France, are more delicious skies, richer sunlight by day, more golden stars by night, than in the wide valley of the Rhone, near where it meets the sea. Leaving the middle ages behind, therefore, I made first for an island in the river, popularly and affectionately termed 'The Basket of Flowers'—a name not undeserved, since the beautiful oval is one blush of colour, principally orange and purple, in splendid contrast with the sweet and cool blue water flowing round it, no longer 'arrowy,' as when it leaves the great lake of Switzerland. This, however, was not to be the scene of the *fête*, although many a skiff lay moored in the shallows for a time, while the young Provençals gathered nosegays for wreathing into garlands and crowns. The perfectly pink rose is here, in poetical exuberance. When sufficient wealth of tint and perfume had been amassed, a not too gracious permission was given me to enter a boat, which shot over to the shore in a few minutes, landing us not far from the Tower of Philip the Beautiful. A tedious walk across a marshy flat; and next, about half-way between Avignon and a line of villages unaccountably called 'sleep-houses,' into a valley cradled among low green hills, where every sign of indolent enjoyment was visible—groups, all ribbon and frippery, that had not been down to the river; little moss-heaps shining with fruit; large red jars, of classic shape, containing liquid refreshment of the mildest kind; and trays of long, thin, sweet cakes, intermingled with more prosaic wine-bottles and piles of bread. It was not easy to get near any of this, even for the satisfaction of curiosity; the people of the sweet region have their manners yet to learn, and do not hesitate to push a stranger aside with considerable roughness. I found it necessary, indeed, to make a detour, in order to avoid trespassing upon the pleasure-makers; but this was worth while, in order to gain a glimpse, unique in my experience at all events, of unspoiled Provençal ceremonies and rejoicings. We are accustomed, and rightly, to regard Provence as a distinctively pastoral country; yet it includes, like Dauphiné, some of the wildest spots in Europe, and this was one—small in extent, yet singularly curious and savage; a valley graceful and green enough, but forking into rugged and dark recesses on every side—a scene such as is not popularly

supposed to represent the south of France, with huge blocks of stone scattered about, and still such an exuberance of flowers and verdure, that nothing of the barbarous remained. On the steep slope of a hill, a little church, with a miniature belfry, whence, in the broad and abounding daylight—between four and five in the morning—rang out a half-lively, half-plaintive invitation to the people.

Before long they came. I noticed that, practically, the congregation would be made up of young girls. A few of the bolder youths ventured in; but they evidently formed no part of the celebrations, so far. As a matter of course, I did not attempt to join the congregation, contenting myself by observing the damsels, as they tripped along in double lines up the slope, accompanying the ascent by a monotonous, though not unmusical hymn, which, again, sounded in unison with the tinkling of goats' bells lower down. The sight was pretty, and the concert altogether a striking one; for the singing was all in the ancient Provençal, adapted from the historic minstrels; and the modest procession, moving up and down the bright hillside—and arrayed in what a London dress-maker would seize the opportunity of styling 'Laura blue'—for Laura, in blue, is said to have tripped upon this very sward between five and six hundred years ago—and wearing chaplets, suggested a scene from old romance.

Certain young ladies, in bodies of sixteen each, wearing polished badges and rosettes on their arms, detached themselves from the miscellaneous crowd, in obedience to a kind of muster-roll called by their leaders, and mounted a sort of natural terrace, half-turf, half-sand. Each of these damsels carried a tambourine, accompanying herself. They were the *farandoleuses*, and their dance—a kind of weaving in and out—was an inheritance from the antique gaieties of Provence. Now and then, one of the innocents, in the fulness of her pleasure, would break into an impromptu song, while others caught in their tambourines a flower thrown by some ambitious youth who had clambered up a ledge with that purpose.

In addition to the central group, there was another, having, apparently, nothing to do with it. These were Nausicaa and her maidens, washing linen down in the bed of the valley, where the stream, like Zadig's Waters of Oblivion, wanders to and fro, or flows amid a hundred little islets that glitter wonderfully in the sunshine. I would compare them with emeralds, were it not for the fear of the copyright laws. It cannot be honestly said, however, that, except where the ground is damp, much brilliant green displays itself. The sky, after early morning, becomes tinged with copper; the olives on the slopes are small and tawny; the vines, on an average, are of the size of currant-bushes, with grapes about the size of their fruit; and the people, the elderly women especially, are preternaturally withered, looking as though they had emerged from Libya, rather than from one among the most abounding provinces of France. Of these feminine elders, a large number were seated on a bank of turf, good-humouredly watching the dance; while above them, magnificently indifferent to all that passed below, was steadily, though feebly climbing, the well-known herb-picker of Avignon, whose finger may literally be said to be in every pie. I wish I had brought away a photograph of that venerable

head and graphic face. All this while, the *farandoles* continued their fantastic measure, infinitely to the mortification of the young men, who had been promising themselves every kind of triumph, and been practising for days; but in due time their opportunity arrived, when, 'with many a flirt and flutter,' carelessly arranging their ribbons, bantering their partners, and looking marvellously unconscious, they fell in to the jingling of the tambourines, now and then fortified by the strains of a double flageolet, which awoke long and piercing echoes among the hills. If there was less elegance, there was more energy in the dance after this reinforcement, fifteen couples whirling down the steep slope, and up again, and so on until high noon, when the turf actually scorched beneath the sun. All movement ceased, and I was anxious to learn what would be the next rising of the curtain upon this Arcadia. It rose upon eating and drinking—shall we say of rose-leaves and honey? No; of pork; dried boiled beef, unsalted, from yesterday; cold cabbage soup; immense rolls of hard-crusted bread; and thick yellow cakes. Some drank water; others took, from wooden bottles, draughts of that local wine, or of the 'warm South,' as Keats has it, which tastes like a decoction of leather; for, in the homelier parts of this district, a diamond might as well be looked for as a bottle of good wine. There is an immense quantity of lemonade consumed, made from the local lemons, which, like the local oranges, are green—the only thing really orange-coloured being the marble, with which even the cottages are frequently built. A little after mid-day, the celebration was considered at an end; the elders broke up their camp; the youths and young girls paired off homewards, still clamouring with their tambourines and their songs. By early evening, the valley was in perfect peace again; but far into the night the streets and squares of Avignon were resonant of holiday mirth, of a somewhat less Arcadian quality than that which had made a picture and a concert on the opposite side of the Rhone.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE Royal Academy of Medicine of Belgium has published a quarto volume on typhoid fever, in which the nature, the causes, and the treatment of that deadly disease are fully considered and discussed by Dr Cousot, who, by the way in which he has executed his task, has gained the gold medal offered by the Academy. After shewing in what typhoid fever consists, Dr Cousot explains the means to be taken to prevent its contagious effects, and among these, phenic acid and coal-tar occupy a prominent place. Both are active disinfectants, and the acid mingled with water to a hundredth or a thousandth per cent. is efficacious for sprinkling, for deodorising, and for washing. The use of these remedies combined with strict cleanliness is so beneficial, that in districts which formerly were never free from typhoid, not a case has occurred during three years.

We hear that 'pulmonic candles' are now manufactured in New York, for the cure or relief of bronchitis and other affections of the throat. They

are composed of balsams and resins, which, when burned, are said to impart to the atmosphere of a room a soothing fragrance beneficial to the lungs.

Professional observers of mental diseases have for some years been aware that lunacy is on the increase in this country. A similar phenomenon has been remarked at the antipodes, and may be studied in the statistical tables published by the government of New South Wales, for these shew 'that there is a steady increase, not only in the number of the insane, but in the proportion which they bear to the rest of the population.' These facts deserve serious consideration, and science should be called on to do its best to check the growth of so fearful a malady. Meanwhile, let the proposition be remembered, that man has power over himself to prevent or control insanity.

The appliances in the art of dentistry have been of late numerous and ingenious. We now learn that steam-power is made use of in the preparation of artificial teeth, and in operations on the mouth. 'The treadle is abolished,' says an enterprising dentist, 'and of course the tiresome action of the foot and leg with it. The operator has as perfect control over his body as though he were doing nothing in the way of work. Every operation—excavating, putting in the gold, finishing, polishing, separating, and so forth, can now be done by steam-power.'

Among odds and ends may be mentioned a new ink brought out in Paris: the base is carbon and glycerine, and the ink thereby is said to be unalterable, and harmless for steel pens—A means to hook on wagons to a train without exposing the man who does the hooking-on to injury—A method invented by a spinner at Lille to produce thread or yarn of flax and hemp at a lower price than cotton yarn—An automatic electro-whistle to give information to guards and drivers of railway trains. Many attempts have been made to apply a whistle that should blow by the pressure of the locomotive in passing; but the difficulty of producing the requisite effect by an instantaneous touch on a hard surface has proved too great. In this new automatic whistle, contact is made by means of an electric brush, which, under all circumstances, insures the passage of the electric current—Pruning-shears with blades adapted to all circumstances: to cut flowers, to prune flowering shrubs, to clip away ground shoots in copses, or to cut large branches from trees overhead.

We learn from the *Proceedings* of the Entomological Society that the coffee plantations in Natal suffer to a serious extent from the attacks of a beetle. On one estate five thousand trees had been destroyed. It is thought that these mischievous beetles may have come from old stumps left in the ground; and it appears that the only effectual way to get rid of them is to pick them off carefully by hand.

Dr Packard of Salem, Massachusetts, observes that entomologists are wanted, who, instead of studying exclusively the structure of insects, will

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study their habits, and make known to gardeners and farmers those which are mischievous, and those which are beneficial. There are, he says, more than 50,000 species of insects in the United States, and of this large number 10,000 are found in the state of Massachusetts. Among the 10,000 there are 'at least 1000 destructive species.' According to Dr Packard, the ravages of these destroyers are 'really appalling,' and are 'to be estimated by hundreds of thousands of dollars.' It is obvious that no means of checking the mischief can be employed, until the particular way in which each species does its particular mischief has been ascertained.

The desire of the present day seems to be for big things in more senses than one. When the 35-ton gun was fabricated at the Royal Arsenal, and christened the 'Woolwich Infant,' it was thought generally that the limit was reached, and that at last we had a gun which was big enough. But the spirit of destruction is insatiable, and now demands an 81-ton gun, which, as we are informed, is actually commenced. One might imagine that a mass so huge and ponderous would be quite useless when constructed, were it not that mechanical skill in the present day proves itself equal even to the biggest emergency. And so we are to have a gun that, with a charge of nearly two hundred pounds of powder, will fire a cylindrical shot about four feet long and a thousand pounds weight, that, at a distance of a mile and three-quarters, will strike with a force of twelve thousand tons. One such shot, if it happened to hit, would sink the biggest war-ship that could ever be built.

The shots of the thirty-five-ton gun weigh seven hundred pounds each. In the nick of time, Mr Cunningham has contrived a 'patent shot rack,' by which two men can lift a seven-hundred-pound shot in two seconds, and in ten seconds more, convey it to the loading-port in the ship's turret.

A paper read before the Institution of Civil Engineers shews what prodigious difficulties are encountered by those who construct roads in the hill-country of India, where no earth-work will resist two rainy seasons. In the Himalaya, the annual rainfall amounts to two hundred and twenty inches, and at times five inches fall in an hour; hence a road, unless constructed of the best material, and with due precautions, may be washed away at short notice. Above eight thousand feet, the snow must be guarded against. In one place an avalanche half a mile long and a hundred feet thick came down, carried away a stone bridge of forty feet span, and remained unmelted six months. Experience has shewn that where forests prevail it is best, though with more labour, to cut the road through the forest, because the trees break the force of the rain, and the mould beneath passes the water gently away; whereas on a bare hillside the rush of water would sweep everything before it. Sometimes a road is required along the face of a vertical cliff; and a shelf is erected, or a half-tunnel is blasted out, which, with the shelf, makes a sufficient

thoroughfare. Where wood is plentiful, it is found more expeditious to heat the rock by great fires, and then flood the hot places with water, whereby the rock breaks away in large masses, and with far less trouble than in blasting. In the preparation of a preliminary gangway along the face of the cliff, there is abundant room for the exercise of ingenuity, for it involves the problem of standing on nothing.

When the Swedish polar expedition was on its way to the north in 1870, the explorers discovered at Ovifak, on the south shore of Disko Island, large masses of native iron, of various sizes, up to twenty tons, lying in a small space among boulders of granite and gneiss. Specimens were brought home, and distributed among the mineralogists of Europe, and the result of their analyses and investigations is, that opinions are divided as to whether those blocks of iron came from the sky or the earth. Some argue that they fell; others, that they were upheaved from below. It is somewhat remarkable that in the milder climate of Europe the specimens sweat a yellowish brown liquid, consisting chiefly of a salt of iron. One effect of the scientific discussion above adverted to may be to direct more attention to Greenland, a country worth attention, for its mineral resources, including lignite and graphite, are abundant. An Arctic Committee, comprising Fellows of the Royal and Royal Geographical Societies, have tried to persuade Chancellors of the Exchequer to find money for another north polar expedition. They may perhaps make the mineral wealth of Greenland a weighty argument in their favour.

Professor J. D. Dana, in a scientific discussion of 'Results of the Earth's Contraction,' says that iron was a very common ingredient in the original fused material of the surface of the liquid globe; that, 'in fact, unlike human history, the earth's iron age was its earliest.' The present state of science, he remarks, affords no explanation why most of the dry land of the globe should have been located about the north pole, and of the water about the south. Physicists say that it indicates greater attraction, and therefore a greater density, in the solid material beneath the southern ocean. But what is the explanation of the fact, that the mineral ingredients are so gathered about the south pole as to give greater density to the crust in that hemisphere? 'It may be,' says Professor Dana, 'that magnetite is much more abundantly diffused through the antarctic crust than through the arctic.'

During the last session, a communication was made to the Geological Society about a mine in North Carolina, United States, which yields corundum, rubies, and sapphires. Some of the crystals of corundum are so large that they weigh from two to three hundred pounds. When it is remembered that corundum is next to the diamond in hardness, some idea may be formed of the value of those large crystals. When crushed, and reduced to various degrees of fineness, they are used for the grinding and polishing of precious stones. The discovery of this remarkable mine is regarded by geologists as the discovery of the 'actual home' of the ruby and sapphire, for nearly all previously found were taken from the beds of rivers.

How did the diamonds come in South Africa?

is a question to which an answer was given at a meeting of the same Society. It appears that the diamonds are found only in 'peculiar circular areas,' and these are described as 'pipes' which, in former ages, were the vents of volcanos. And further we are told that the diamonds when found are for the most part fragments, complete specimens being comparatively rare. Hence the supposition is, that large masses of diamond were formed in the intense heat of nature's underground laboratory, and were broken to pieces when subsequently upheaved with other masses of rock. Professor Ramsay, who was chairman of the meeting here under notice, stated that 'he thought it more probable that the diamonds were brought up from some subterranean metamorphosed rock, than that they were generated in the lava.' It is remarkable that the diamonds found in any one of the pipes are different in character from those found in the others.

Dr Haast, F.R.S., in an address delivered to the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, New Zealand, questions the theory of upheaval and depression with which some geologists account for differences of geological structure, or for the presence of the same flora and fauna in countries far apart. He argues that similitude of species may exist as well as identity; and says: 'Might we not throw out the conjecture that in two more or less distant countries which never were directly united, some forms of organic life can and do exist, which shew what to us appears identical specific characters, because the cause or causes of their evolution were identical or nearly identical, and thus a considerable number of supposed changes in the level of many countries of which we do not find geological records, can be dispensed with.'

It has occurred to certain Frenchmen that if they were to grow barley of the right kind, they might sell the whole crop to the brewers of England, and thus add to the trade resources of their country. A statement on the subject has been made to the Society for the Encouragement of National Industry at Paris, from which we learn that the kind of barley most in request for conversion into malt is dense and heavy, and that this kind can be grown on the calcareous soils of France.

Pasteur, a member of the Academy of Sciences at Paris, one of the ablest chemists of the day, has given a practical turn to his researches on fermentation. In a communication to the Society named in the preceding paragraph, he states that he has succeeded in brewing beer which will not alter in any climate, and may be kept an indefinite time. Ordinary beer, as is well known, is very liable to change, especially in hot weather. M. Pasteur shews that this deterioration is a consequence of unhealthy fermentation; that with perfectly pure yeast, which he has succeeded in making, a healthy alcoholic fermentation can be produced, even in the temperature of summer. The process for making the yeast, and the kind of apparatus required, are to be described in a future communication. Meanwhile, it is something to be informed on such good authority, that the use of ice, and other expensive precautions, to which brewers have recourse, may in future be dispensed with, and to know that methods are available by which unhealthy ferments can be detected, and the conditions of their existence ascertained.

WINTER.

HAIL! monarch of the leafless crown,
Rare seen save with a gloomy frown,
With ice for sceptre, robes of snow,
Thy throne—the stream's arrested flow—
Stern tyrant! whom the hast'ning sun
Doth loathe to serve, by vapours dun
Begirt, a melancholy train,
O'er Nature holding saddest reign.
Lo! of thy rigour birds make plaint,
And all things 'neath thy burden faint,
Nor cheered are they by message cold,
In answer by the north wind told,
The envoy of thy grievous sway,
When thou wouldst drive all hope away
From Nature, yearning to restore
To earth the bliss it knew before,
When Summer ruled with empire mild,
And Autumn, still a ruddy child,
Lay cradled 'mong the greenery
Of whisp'ring grove and laden tree.
The brook that prattled to the air
Of golden harvests, scenes as fair
As poet rapt in fancy's maze
Could scarce enshrine in mortal lays,
Now rude and angry hurls along
The hearers of his summer song—
The branch and leaf that once repaid
His music with their tender shade,
And catching Zephyr's honey'd tone,
To his sweet tuning joined their own.
Or bound, perchance, in durance slow,
Full faint he wends, and moaning low,
Fit dirge he makes o'er freedom lost,
In joy of which he wanton tossed
The falling blossoms on his wave,
For water-nymphs to catch and save.
Now strip of his green bravery,
In piteous plight the weary tree
Is blown upon by mocking winds,
Whom changed now he sighing finds
From those gay playmates welcomed erst
In glee by his young leaves when first
They wove their merry breeze-taught dance,
And broke their feathered lodgers' trance,
What time the eastern wave did gleam
'Neath fore-feet of the golden team.
Not busy now with tender care,
For coming brood the birds prepare
Their airy cradle, rocked unseen
By Dryad hands behind the screen
Of leafy curtains, where no eye
Of mischief curious may pry.
The thrush that erst with welling voice
Made all the tangled brake rejoice
In echoes of his mellowed strain,
To mope in silence now is fain;
Nor ever pipes from straining throat
The varied wonders of his note.
So bleak the scene, so sad the day,
Too harsh, O Winter, is thy sway!

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.